

Instruction

RECOGNITION OF RELIGIOUS BELIEFS AND CUSTOMS

AR 6141.2

The Superintendent or designee shall ensure the following for the recognition of religious beliefs and customs in district schools:

1. The approach to religion is academic and not devotional
2. The goal is for student awareness of religion in historical and contemporary societies
3. The students may not be pressed to accept any one religion
4. The school may include the study of religion as part of the history-social science curriculum, but the practice of religions may not be sponsored
5. The students may be exposed to and educated about a diversity of religious views and beliefs, but a particular view or belief may not be imposed, nor may any one religion be promoted or denigrated

Staff shall make every effort to schedule one-time events, such as examinations, district-sponsored trips, special laboratories, picture-taking days, and class parties, to minimize conflicts with major religious holidays of all faiths such that no one faith is disproportionately impacted.

Programs and Exhibits

When district programs and exhibits are in any way related to instruction about religion or religious holidays, the following guidelines shall be observed:

1. The principal or designee shall ensure that district-sponsored programs are presented in an objective manner, consistent with the accompanying Board policy
2. The principal or designee shall be kept informed of the program's development
3. Program or exhibit planners shall take into consideration the diverse religious faiths represented in the community, student body, and staff

Opt-Outs

When a parent/guardian submits a written request to opt the

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parent's/guardian's student out of instruction based on religious beliefs, customs, or practices, the request shall include the following:

1. The specific instructional content of which the student should be opted out
2. The specific religious belief(s), custom(s), and/or practice(s) with which the specific instructional content substantially interferes
3. How the specific instructional content substantially interferes with the specific religious belief(s), custom(s), and/or practice(s), including any grade level or individual student characteristics relevant to the opt-out request

As necessary, the Superintendent or designee may work with district legal counsel to evaluate each opt-out request and determine whether it shall be granted.

Policy Reference Disclaimer:

These references are not intended to be part of the policy itself, nor do they indicate the basis or authority for the Governing Board to enact this policy. Instead, they are provided as additional resources for those interested in the subject matter of the policy.

State

Ed. Code 38130-38139

Ed. Code 46014

Ed. Code 51240

Ed. Code 51511

Ed. Code 51930-51939

Federal

20 USC 4071-4074

20 USC 6061

20 USC 7904

Management Resources

California Department of Education
Publication

Court Decision

Court Decision

Court Decision

Court Decision

Description

[Civic Center Act](#)

[Absences for religious purposes](#)

[Excuse from instruction due to religious beliefs](#)

[Religious matters properly included in courses of study](#)

[California Healthy Youth Act](#)

Description

Equal Access Act

[School prayer](#)

[School prayer](#)

Description

[Appendix F history social science framework for California public schools](#)

[Mahmoud v. Taylor \(2025\) 606 U.S. ____ \(2025 WL 1773627\)](#)

[Flore v. Sioux Falls \(1980\) 619 F.2d 1311](#)

[Fellowship of Christian Athletes v. San Jose Unified](#)

[School District Board of Education \(2023\) 82 F.4th 664](#)

[Kennedy v. Bremerton \(2022\) 142 S.Ct. 2407](#)

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Court Decision	<i>Cole v. Oroville Union High School District</i> (2000, 9th Cir.) 228 F.3d 1092
Court Decision	<i>Lassonde v. Pleasanton Unified School District</i> (2003, 9th Cir.) 320 F.3d 979
Court Decision	<i>Lemon v. Kurtzman</i> (1971) 403 U.S. 602
U.S. Department of Education Publication	<i>Guidance on Constitutionally Protected Prayer and Religious Expression in Public Elementary and Secondary Schools</i>, May 2023
Website	<i>CSBA District and County Office of Education Legal Services</i>
Website	<i>California Department of Education</i>
Website	<i>CSBA</i>
Website	<i>U.S. Department of Education</i>

Cross References

Policy	Description
0410	<i>Nondiscrimination In District Programs And Activities</i>
0450	<i>Comprehensive Safety Plan</i>
0450	<i>Comprehensive Safety Plan</i>
1325	<i>Advertising And Promotion</i>
1330	<i>Use Of School Facilities</i>
1330	<i>Use Of School Facilities</i>
5113	<i>Absences And Excuses</i>
5113	<i>Absences And Excuses</i>
5121	<i>Grades/Evaluation Of Student Achievement</i>
5121	<i>Grades/Evaluation Of Student Achievement</i>
5127	<i>Graduation Ceremonies And Activities</i>
5132	<i>Dress And Grooming</i>
5132	<i>Dress And Grooming</i>
5141.31	<i>Immunizations</i>
5141.31	<i>Immunizations</i>
5145.2	<i>Freedom Of Speech/ Expression</i>
5145.2	<i>Freedom Of Speech/ Expression</i>
6111	<i>School Calendar</i>
6115	<i>Ceremonies And Observances</i>
6115	<i>Ceremonies And Observances</i>
6142.8	<i>Comprehensive Health Education</i>
6142.8	<i>Comprehensive Health Education</i>
6142.93	<i>Science Instruction</i>
6142.94	<i>History-Social Science Instruction</i>
6143	<i>Courses Of Study</i>
6143	<i>Courses Of Study</i>
6144	<i>Controversial Issues</i>
6145.5	<i>Student Organizations And Equal Access</i>

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6145.5	<i>Student Organizations And Equal Access</i>
6145.8	<i>Assemblies And Special Events</i>
6154	<i>Homework/Makeup Work</i>
6161.11	<i>Supplementary Instructional Materials</i>
6176	<i>Weekend/ Saturday Classes</i>

Regulation

PASADENA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

Approved: January 23, 1996

Pasadena, California

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